



**Declaration on the establishment of the
EFFORTS-FORTE CULTURA Joint Scientific and Expert Committee**

Venice, Italy, 16 September 2022

European cultural and scientific workers, researchers and other experts, and the members and partners of the European fortress network EFFORTS with FORTE CULTURA, which involve 200 European fortified sites, agree there is a need to establish an expert group for international scientific cooperation in finding the best models, projects, programs and tools to preserve, develop and valorise the common European heritage through transnational networking and European projects and make it accessible to a broad public.

We can learn from the European best practice presented at the conference: former military heritage and fortified systems in European border areas should become the new European cultural corridors and meeting spaces for young Europeans, promoting the culture of peace, solidarity, civil initiatives, balanced cultural and social development, common European identity and intercultural dialogue.

Regular annual events, conference and workshops have disseminated important knowledge on fortification construction, history, marketing and tourism development in forts, project development or successful management models, and highlighted the great need for transnational exchange of expertise as one of the most important basics for the preservation and sustainable use of fortified heritage.

The turbulent global context and changes call for common project actions of experts and researchers. We think that multidisciplinary scientific research and expertise, and European cooperation in transnational valorisation of our common European heritage could help to implement the most effective best practices into projects. This would find solutions to current challenges in managing multiple crises faced by EU, such as: the climate crisis, the energy crises, the COVID pandemic and the following crisis of public health, challenges to the world peace, inclusion of migrants and sustainable development of local communities.

We believe that European cultural heritage, which includes former military and fortified areas, could contribute to the more balanced sustainable urban planning and responsible territorial development, contribute to the quality of life of local communities, and be used in achievement of the European Green Deal as well as of the UN Millennium Development Goals and European values of peace and democracy.

VISION of the JSEC:

- ✓ Enforce a **multilateral expert European cooperation framework for common projects for fortification sites and knowledge centers**, based on the sharing of knowledge, in the frame of EFFORTS Fortification Heritage Knowledge Center in Forte Marghera (IT)

MISSION of the JSEC:

- ✓ Streamline the **continuous platform exchange** and data base of and between fortification heritage experts and scientists for submission of project proposals in relevant EU, international and national funding programmes.
- ✓ Support **capacity building** for public and private stakeholders achieving the European Green Deal goals through climate change adaptation and socially inclusive action, making fortified heritage the catalyst for green urban development and cohesion and the driver of European social values.
- ✓ Foster **scientific cooperation** between European universities, museums, institutes and cultural institutions to develop multidisciplinary holistic knowledge on management and rehabilitation of fortified sites using climate change actions, intelligent energy and mobility solutions; green responsible tourism; social integration and inclusiveness and cultural diversity; empowering local heritage communities on the basis of the Council of Europe Faro Convention on the value of cultural heritage for society.
- ✓ Support the use of **fortified sites as green buffers for post-pandemic community wellbeing** locations and creative placemaking, but also for peace-making actions promoting intercultural cooperation and understanding.

More specific, the JSEC will work on the activation of experts, awareness raising campaigns, organisation of workshops, conferences and summer schools with the aim of transfer of knowledge and presentation of European best practice in fortified heritage management, international networking of universities and partner institutions including researcher and student exchange, involvement of interested stakeholders in research related to sustainable valorisation of fortified heritage through international networking, cooperation with European institutions and international organizations such as ICOMOS, ICOFORT and the European Institute for Cultural Routes in developing and certification of the cultural routes of fortified heritage. A rolling working programme of the JSEC can include: European project research, exchange of knowledge, inventory and building research, renovation and preservation, conversion and sustainable use, European Heritage Label and World Heritage nomination, urban and regional development, tourism development and implementation, climate change and sustainability, capacity building programmes, common education and research activities, the New European Bauhaus Initiative and wellbeing of communities, dissonant heritage, ...

All publications and work results the JSEC platform is involved in will be part of the physical and virtual library of the **EFFORTS Fortification Heritage Knowledge Center** in Forte Marghera, at the center of which action is the **EFFORTS Fortification Heritage Impact Study**.

The JSEC will be part of and respond to the **EFFORTS - FORTE CULTURA organisation** and priorities and will work within this organisation to set these same priorities. This will happen clear mention of this belonging and with the support of the EFFORTS-FORTE CULTURA secretariats.

